



Advanced Merkel Cell Carcinoma Effectively Treated with Nivolumab

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Clinical Image

Merkel Cell Carcinoma (MCC) is a rare, often fatal skin malignancy associated with polyoma virus. It frequently presents on sun-exposed skin and has a predilection for older Caucasian individuals who may be immune compromised. Combination chemotherapy, with etoposide and platinum agents has been used for advanced MCC with a median progression free survival of three months. We present the case of 71-year-old male who presented with widespread metastatic disease involving lymph nodes (Figure 1), bones and mesentery after failing attempts at local control with surgery and radiation. He refused chemotherapy and was treated with anti-PD1 antibody, Nivolumab for 12 months with complete remission. Subsequently, on a drug holiday, he developed reoccurrence and was retreated with Nivolumab for an additional 12 months, achieving a complete response. Avelumab (anti-PDL1 antibody) is now approved for advanced MCC; Pembrolizumab and Nivolumab are being evaluated in clinical trials.

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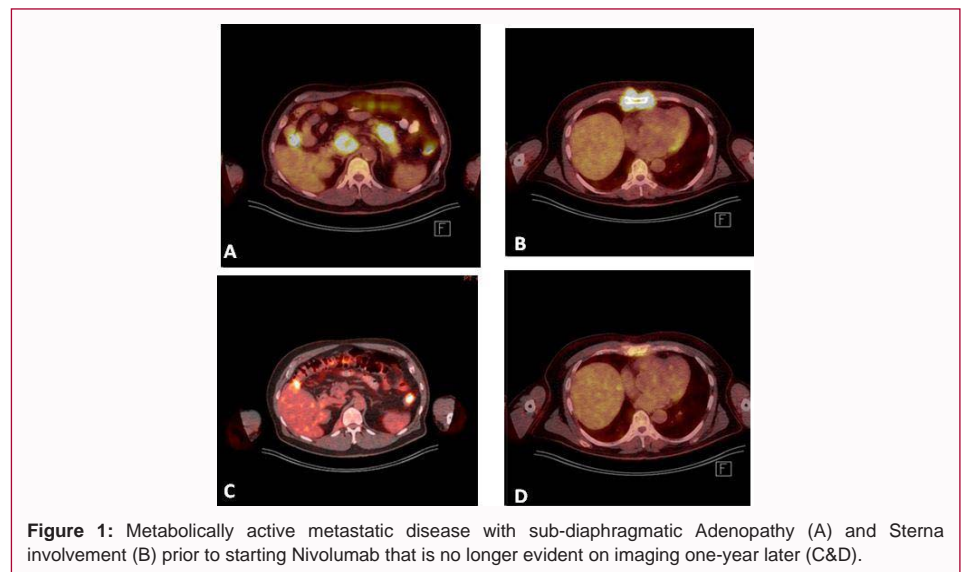


Figure 1: Metabolically active metastatic disease with sub-diaphragmatic Adenopathy (A) and Sternal involvement (B) prior to starting Nivolumab that is no longer evident on imaging one-year later (C&D).